96

A. F. M

Extracts from ~~[illegible]~~

Relating to Emigration Affairs
in the Madras Presidency
(Abuses 1893)

1829 – 1920

(PAGES 1-20)

B.No.4

GOVERNMENT ORDERS AND CONSULTATIONS RETAINED FILE NO.

Extracts from G.O.s and Consultations relating to:- Emigration affairs (1829-1920)

Extracts from G.O.s relating to Emigration affairs' In the Madras Presidency :- Abuses .(1893) (1840-1948)

(1)

~~EXTRACTS FROM GOS RELATING TO POLITICAL AFFAIRS IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY~~. Emigration

(Emigration affair)

Abstract of the GO

R Recording letter from the District Magistrate Godavari, submitting report on petition from certain inhabitants of Penang complaining that women from Godavari and other districts are enticed away for immoral purposes.

REFERENCE:- G.O. No.886, dated 6 -- 11--1893 - Public Department - Ordinary series - Miscellaneous.

-- -- -- -- -- -- --

NOTE:

This petition which purports to have been written by certain residents of Penang bears the mark of only one man by name Palli Vankataratnam.

....

The petition brings to notice the following:-

Near Penang in the straits' Settlements there is a village called Sumatra Dilli which is in the hands of 2 Governments, viz., The Blanda and the Malay Governments. The people of India go to the above place in the hope of making money, but suffer great hardship there and are not able to return to their country. The following will explain the above facts.

Persons acquainted with what goes on in Sumatra ~~Divi~~ Dilli come to this country and entice men thither fradulently representing to them that it is a very wealthy place where they can amass money - After taking the men of this country to the above place they sell them to the owners of the innumerable tobacco and sugar-cane plantations where coolies are much in request - The owners of the plantations afterwards get agreements executed for a term of 6 or 10 years by the men purchased by them on the condition that they shall be fed and paid each 2 or 3 Rs. a month, and send them to work on the plantations. Until the expiry of the term of their agreements, the men are not allowed

to stir out of the plantations. Should, however, any one go out of the plantation, and, complaining to the authorities of the place of the decepation practised upon him, ask for permission to return to his country, the authorities tell him that he cannot be allowed to do so in the face of the agreement executed by him and put him in jail for having to made his escape from the plantation. He is afterwards taken back to the plantation.

So much as regards males. Then as regards the females of this country:-

A man and a woman come to the Kistna or Godavari district go about the villages and lodge in a house. The man then sends the female to the neighbouring houses to make friends with the women there and obtain information concurring concerning them. Ten or fifteen days after, when an intimacy has been formed the female tells one of the women that the person with whom she came is a wealthy resident of Sumatra Dilli, owns 4 storied houses, coaches horses and cows: that he has no wife and that it would be a very good thing if the woman become his wife. She thus gains over 2 or 3 women who consent to being taken secretly to Sumatra Dilli. The male and the female afterwards leave the village at night with the women and instead of getting into a steamer at Cocanada lest they should be caught by the Guard Captain there get into a boat and travel as far as Bezwada or Ellore or Rajahmundri or Cocanada where they get into the train going to Madras . On reaching Madras, they get into a steamer and go to Penang. At Penang where passports are granted to people going to Sumatra Dilli the above persons gain over the Dubash etc., avoid being examined closely and obtain passports. They then go to Dilli where they sell each of the women brought by them from this country to brothal-keepers, for a sum ranging from 200 to 400 Rs. The brothal-keepers afterwards prevail upon the women to execute the agreements for a term of 3 or 4 years. It afterwards the women do not earn money by prostituting themselves they are beaten and are not supplied with food. The women become

diseased in consequence of prostitution and some of them die before the expiry of the term of their agreements. In Dilli there are thousands of females of this country leading a miserable life such as that described above.

Formerly men enticing the people of this country to Divi used to get into a steamer at Coaanada and go to Rangoon, thence to Penang and thence to Dilli. As the Guard Captain at Cocanada used to examine people closely and as the Police detected a few cases of enticed persons. The said men have given up going to Dilli via Rangoon by getting into a steamer at Cocanada.

If the guard Captain at Madras examine closely females bound to Dilli, and if the Police at Bezwada, Ellore, Rajahmundry and Cocanada are on the alert, the above men and females led astray by them, can be caught. The personal inquiries with the Governmant does not apprehend and punish the men who entice the females of this country to Dilli and sell them there.

There is one Ella Venkayya of Nadipudi village in Narasapur Taluk, Godavari Dt., This man prostitutes females. He has a wife named Paidamma who is now in Binji attached to Dilli and holds a license for prostituting girls. Her name is entered in the Penang License account. E. Venkayya entices females of this country to Dilli and delivers them to his wife. E. Venkayya and a Tamil man named Kannayya of Madras are now come to Nadipudi village in Godavari district from Dilli with a sum Rs.2,000 and accompanied by 2 females in order to entice some of the women there. They will hereafter go to Madras where they can be apprehended if orders issue to the Guard Captain at Madras. They can also be apprehended at Bezwada, Ellore Rajahmundry or Cocoanada if orders issue to the Police there.

If these men are punished, no one will in future commit the malpractice specified above.

E. Venkayya is of dark complexion., aged 45 or 50 and portions of his beared and head are grey. Kannayya is of dark complexion and is short. The females that E. Venkayya has brought with him from Dilli bear the name of Venkatarantnam, and are

of the Jendra* caste.

The Petitioner prays in conclusion that measures may be adopted for putting a stop to the malpractices detailed above and for protecting the females of this country.

*** * ***

To

The Superintendent of Police,

Godavari.

Most Honoured Sir,

In reference to your honou's endorsement ~~No.714/28.9)191~~ No.714/28.9.1893, on the District Magistrate's letter ~~No.583/26.9.93~~ No.583/26.9.1893 forwarding to me for enquiry and report, petition purporting to have been presented by certain residents of Penang bringing to notice that one Ella Venkayya of Nadipudi attached to Penugonda station entices females of this country to Dilli I beg respectfully to state that I proceeded to the Village of Nadipudi on the 3rd instant and made the following enquiries. Cherukuri Venkatrayudu, Village magistrate of Nadipudi, stated that Ella Venkayya went to Rangoon and other towns like many others of this village for the purpose of making money and that he took no body with him either males or females. He returned from Penang about 5 months ago and with him a woman evidently a prostitute by name Ganisetti Venkataratnam and a Tamil man by name Kannayya came to Nadipudi. They all put up together for a month. When Ella Venkayya landed at Cocanada, the canals were closed and no boats were playing. Ella Venkayya being afraid of the robbers on the road between Coconada and his native village he lodged a sum of Rs.500--0--0 which he brought from Penang, with one Mummidi Venkata Reddi at Cocanada who like Venkayya made a trip to Penang. After the Canals were opened, Ella Venkayya

---

* A certain tribe of weavers).

unable himself to proceed to Cocanada to get back his money, sent his nephew Subbarayudu aged a bout 14 years and also the said woman Venkataratnam for his assistance. The woman here played a trick at the instigation of Mummidi Venkatareddi who offered promise to keep her under his control. The woman and M.Venkatareddi some how or other managed to obtain the signature of the boy in the account book as a token of the money having been received by him. The woman then refused to go back with the boy to Nadipudi. All this occurred in the early part of July last. The woman them addressed a registered letter to Ella Venkayya at the instigation of M. Venkatareddi stating that of Rs. 1000-0-0 which she gave to him (Ella Venkayya) for safe custody, she received from M. Venkatareddi a sum of Rs.457-0-0 and requesting to remit the balance. This letter from her in whom Venkayya placed so much confidence, broke his heart and proceeded forthwith to Cocanada. He could not find the woman in spite of all his exertions

The Tamil man Kannayya above referred to did not omit to play his part of the trick. Ella Venkayya made friends with him while at Binji. They both enbarked for Cocanada simultaneously. Kannayya seems to have made some money through not so much as Venkayya, and pretended as if he had the desire of buying jewels and volunteered round Venkayya to do the favour of buying jewels for him. Kannayya, after stopping for a month with Venkayya slipped to Cocanada without Venkayya's knowledge, made his appearance before M. Venkatareddi produced an authority purporting to have been given by Venkayya and took a sum of Rs. 90-0-0 from him out of Venkayya's credit.

Paidamma is no wife of Ella Venkayya as stated in the petition. Venkayya says she is a public prostitute holding licence for that purpose. Her native place is is Vizianagaram and she went to Penang about 20 years ago. Venkayya has got intimacy with her since 15 years.

I have enquired many people not only in the village of Nadipudi but also in the neighbouring villages i.e., Vadali and Siddantam. There is not the slightest talk in those villages

of the malpractices referred to in the petition. In the above villages there are innumerable number of men of lower order who had been to Rangoon and other places more than once for the purpose of making money. They say they went there at their own accord. If what stated in the petition is a fact, there would have been ample evidence forthcoming on the subject; because it is of such a nature that it would provoke the feelings of every man both rich and poor. The petition seems to have taken its origin from the hands of one Mummidi Venkatareddi above referred to, who is ~~xxx~~ now on terms of hostility with Ella Venkayya on account of the money affair detailed above.

I beg to remain,

Most honoured Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Sd.) V.VENKATASWAMY

D.Dn. Inspector of Police.

Camp: Nadipudi.
5th October 1893.

Extracts from G.O.S. relating to Emigration affairs: (1829-194?)
In the Madras Presidency:- Emigration Affairs. (1893)

EXTRACTS FROM GOS RELATING TO POLITICAL AFFAIRS IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

(Emigration affair)

Abstract of the G.O.

Recording in continuation of GO 8th August 92 N 546 copy of despatch from the secretary of State forwarding copy of despatch from Hall Consul in Reunion regarding the case of an Indian who was imprisoned in the Depot communal at St.Denies being unable to pay the tax levied on him as being of Asiatic Origin.

REFERENCE: GO N.932 dated 18th Nov. 1893 - Public Department - Ordinary Miscellaneous.

- - - - - - - -

India Office,
London, 21st September 1893.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE MOST HONOURABLE THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL.

MY LORD MARQUIS,--In continuation of the Correspondence forwarded with my despatch of the 31st Ultimo, No.98, I transmit for your information, copy of a further Despatch from Her Majesty's Consul in Reunion, regarding the case of an Indian who was unable to pay the tax levied upon him as being of Asiatic origin, and who was imprisoned in the Depot Communal at St. Denis.

No.20, dated 21st July 1893 and enclosures.

2. The Question of the legality of this tax is now under reference to the Legal Adviser of Her Majesty's Embassy in Paris, as your Excellency will observe from the accompanying correspondence noted in the Margin.

Foreign Office to India Office, 1st June 1893 and enclosure.
India Office to Foreign Office, 24th June 1893.

I have the honour to be,
MY LORD MARQUIS,
Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant,
KIMBERLEY.

- - - - - - -

No.20, dated Reunion, the 21st July 1893.

From -- C.W. BENNETT Esq., Her Majesty's Consul at Reunion,

To -- The Right Honourable the Earl of Resebery, K.G. &c &c.,

I have the honour to inclose a copy of a corres ondence, as marked in the margin, which has passed between M. Manes and myself regarding the imprisonment, in the Depot Communal at St. Denis, of a free Indian, named Doresamy, who has been unable to pay the tax levied upon him as being of Asiatic Origin.

Consul Bennett, May 27th 1893.
Governor Manes, May 28th 1893.
Consul Bennett, May 28th 1893.
Governor Manes, May 31st 1893.
Consul Benett, June 8th 1893.

The fact of this Indian, having been discovered by Mr. Mackenzie and myself in the first establishment visited by us on our recent tour of inspection produced a most marked impression upon M. Manes and is no doubt mainly the cause of such a sudden VOLTE FACE as His Excellency performed on this occasion.

It is now placed on record that persons of Asiatic Origin who cannot pay their tax can only be imprisoned for five days, instead of, as in the past, for three or four months.

- - - - - - -

No.16, dated St. Denis, the 27th May 1893.

From -- C.W. BENNETT, Esq., Her Majesty's Consul at Reunion,

To -- His Excellency the Governor of Reunion.

During the inspection of the Depot Communal made yesterday by Mr. Mackenzie, I inquired where was the room in which Indians were locked up who failed to pay their taxes.

M.Le Protecteur, as the matter did not in any way concern his department, referred me to M.Le Maire.

M.Le Maire in eloquent phrases expressed his disapproval of the practice of converting depots into prison, and before he had quite finished the statement of his views upon the subject, the door of the hovel in question was opened and an Indian, with eyes blinded by the sunlight, ran amongst us. His name I found was Doresamy. He arrived from Mauritius three months ago

and has been imprisoned at the depot for six weeks. I cound not ascertain how much longer he was to be kept there.

The hovel in question was about 10 by 12 feet with door and a window being tightly closed, it was perfectly dark. It is to be hoped in the interests of humanity that they are not usually closed.

Her Majesty's Government could hardly have had a clearer proof of ~~mmy~~ my constantly repeated assertion that between prison and depot there is only a difference of name, than was yesterday presented before Mr. Muir-Mackenzie as Delegate of the Indian Government.

I shall be much obliged if Your Excellency will let me know what steps will now be taken to put an end to Doresamy's imprisonment .

- - - - - - - - - - - - -

(FRENCH)

St. Denis, le 28th Mai 1893.

From -- M.E. Manes, Gouverneur de la Reunion,

To -- M.Le Consul d' Anglettere, St. Denis.

J'ai I'honneur de repondre a votre lettre du 27du courant, No.16.

Aussitot informe de la presence audepot communal de St. Denis du nomme Doresamy Arlaguery. j'ai prie M.Le Directeur de I'Interieur de me fournir des reseignements sur la situation de cet Indien.

Il resulte des informations donnees par ce chef ~~ss~~ d'Administration que le Nomme Doreasamy, Ouvrier en bijouterie, est arrive a ly Reunion le 24 Fevrier 1893. En sa qualite d'etranger il etait redevable d'unne taxe de sejour s'elevant a 17francs 55 cts., pour le premier semestre de cette annee. Comme il ~~xi~~ S'etait obstinement refuse a se liberer de la taxe due au Tresor et dont la perception est autorisee par un decret de M. Le president de la Republique. Il fut place and depot Communal en vertu de l'article 3 d'un arrete pris par mon predecesseur en date duler Avril 1887, en attendant que sa situation fut reglee.

Pendant son sejour au depot le bijoutier Amourdelingom proposa d'acquitter la taxe de Doresamy a la condition qu'il travaillat pour lui. Ce dernier s'y est encore refuse. Ce qui prouve que cet Indien non seulement ne voulait pas se sumettre aux obligations du decret precite, mais encore etait decide a ne se livrer a aucun travail.

Dans cette situation le nomme Doresamy aurait pu etre defere aux tribunaux pour s'entendre condamner a cent francs d'amende et a un emprisonnerment de quinze jours, en conformite des prescriptions du decret presidentiel susvise.

Au lieu de requerir contre lui les penies cidessus indiquees, le service de la police placa Doresamy a titre de mesure transitoire et en execution de l'arrete du 1er Avril 1887 au Depot Communal.

Jusque la, la measure la plus bienveillants a ete appliquee a Doresamy, Mais je suis tres surpris d'apprendre par vons que cet indien se trouvait non pas mis en subsistance au dit depot, mais emprisonne.

C'est la une infraction manifeste aux reglements en vigueur contre laquelle je ne saurais trop m'elever.

Ct j'invite M. Le Directeur de I'Interieur non-seulement a infliger un blame des plus severes a lagent qui a commis cette infraction, mais a faire mettre Doresamy immediatement en liberte sauf a lui reclamer par les voices legales et apress en delai moral le paiement de la somme dont il est debiteut.

. . . . . .

No.17, dated Reunion, the 28th May 1893.

From -- C.W. BENNETTE Esq., Her Majesty's Consul at Reunion,

to -- Son Excellence M. Le Gouverneur de la Reunion.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's note of to-day's date with reference to the imprisonment at the Depot Communal of a free British Indian named Doresamy.

I I am pleased to see that Your Excellency acknowledges the illegality of this proceeding which is by no means an unusual one. I should be pleased to convey to Her Majesty's Government Your Excellency's formal assurance that in future a very strict difference will be made between depots and prisons.

At the same time if Doresamy cannot pay 17 francs 55 cents which is now due, it is hardly to be expected that he will be able to pay 100 francs after he has been imprisoned in the depot for six weeks and then finished the term of fifteen days to which he will, I presume, be condemned in due course. His one Hundred francs fine will be converted into one hundred days' imprisonment, so that for the crime of being poor and unable to pay a poll tax levied upon the inhabitants of a foreign country which Your Excellency's administration is now pressing to send labourers to Reunion, he will be imprisoned in all for over five months.

I would beg respectfully to suggest to Your Excellency that the Penal laws against Asiatics which by a recent decision of the Counseil General are to be suppressed only "des la reprise de I'Immigration Indienne" might lead Her Majesty's Government to wonder whether it is the real wish of Your Excellency's administration to have any Indians at all in the Island.

Mr. Mackenzie being of opinion that Doresamy will never be able to pay his fines or escape his imprisonment, has deposited in my hands the sum necessary to prevent the Indian from further molestation.

... .

(FRENCH)

No.152, St, Dennis, le 31 Mai 1893.

From: M. Manes, Gouverneur De la Reunion,

To : M. Le Consul d'Angleterre.

Je tiens a ne pas laisser sans reponse certaines opinions on appreciations enoncees dans votre lettre du 26 Mai courant, No.17, et qui ne peuvent entre que le resultat de renseignements qui vous ont ete fournis.

(T2)

Vous me demandez de vous donner I assurance qu'a Ili avenir une stricte difference a sera faite entre les depots et les prisons.

Je puis d'autant plus facilement vous donner cette assuranc que cette difference a de tout temps existe. Je ne pense pas qu'un fait unique et accidental quel j'al blame et Sur lequel j'ai provoque les explications du Maire de St. Denis qui a la surveillance du depot, puisse etre considere comme etant un fair habituel et general.

Vous croyez que si Doresamy etait condamne a 100 francs d'amende pour defaut de paiement de sa taxe de sejour, cette amende serait convertie en cent jours de prison c'est la encore une erreur.

Cette conversion n'a lieu que pour les amendes prononcees par le Tribunal disciplinaire contre les immigrants soums au regime du travail et pour des infractions aux dispositions du decret du 27th April 1887.

Pour les etrangers soumis e la taxe de sejour les recover nurs des domaines charges du recouvrement des amendes de cette de cette nature exercen contre eux la contrainte par corps.

Or aux termes de l'article 9 de la loi du 27 juillet 1887 rendue applicable aux colonies par decret du 27 juin 1891 la duree de cette contrainte, en matiere de simple police, est au maximum de cinq jours. Telle est en consequence la peine d'emprisonment que peut avoir a subir uo contrevenant au reglement sur la taxe de sejour et non pas cinq mois, les tribunaux ne prononcant presque jamais l'emprisonment de 15 jours prevu par le reglement precite.

Dans votre opinion Doresamy serait pauvre et incapable de payer la taxe qui lui est reclamee. Je vous prie de vouloir bien remarquer, ainsi que je vous l'ai deja fait connaitre, que sa pauvrete previent uniquement de sa paresse; car, des l'arrivee de Doresamydans la Colonie, le bijoutier Amourdelingom

(13)

lui a propose de payer as taxe a la condition quil s'employat chez lui a raison de 15 francs par mois non compris la nourriture et le logement. Doresamy s'y est formellement refuse et a prefere rester dans l'oisivete.

En ce qui concerne le desir exprime par le conseil General et auquel vous faites allusion, je n'ai aucun motif pour ne pas le croire sincere.

. . . .

No.19, dated Reunion, the 8th June 1893

From: C.W. BENNETT, Esq., Her Majesty's Council at Reunion.

To: Son Excellence M. Le Gouverneur de la Reunion.

I am much obliged for Your Excellency's note of the 31st Ultimo, regarding the imprisonment of Doresamy in the Depot Communal.

I am pleased to note the fact that in future the law will be less strictly applied in cases where Indians are unable to pay their taxes, that depots will no longer be used as prisons, and the 100 francs fine will not, as formerly, be converted into imprisonment in the depot.

I would take this opportunity to draw Your Excellency's attention to the fact that in the communes which I have visited in company with Mr. Mackenzie, the Depot Communal, if not as at St. Paul, a part of the actual prison, is in very few instances a building situated at any great distances from the prison.

As, however, the question of Communal depots will be fully considered in connection with Mr. Mackenzie's visit, it is unnecessary for me to enter further into it.

... .

Dated Foreign Office, London, the 1st June 1893.

From:- Sir T.V. Lister, Assistant Secretary of State, Foreign Office.

To : The Under Secretary of State for India.

With reference to your letter of the 18th of January last, I am directed by the Earl of Rosebery to transmit the accompanying copy of a further despatch from Mr. Bennett, Her Majesty's Consul at Reunion, in regard to the question of the legality of the poll tax imposed on persons of Asiatic and African origin residing in the Island, from which it will be sent that Consul Bennett is doubtful of the success of an appeal to the Cour de Cassation in Paris, and has thought it best not to commit the British Indian community to the costs of such an appeal at present.

From Consul Benett, No.9 dated 22nd April 1893.

He suggests , however, that the opinion of the legal adviser of Her majesty's Embassy in Paris should be taken as to the validity of the law of June 17th, 1887, published in the "French" Journal Officiel" of July 7th 1887, and I am to state that, if Secretary the Earl of Kimberly concurs, Her Majesty's Ambassadon in Paris will be instructed to obtain, it.

. . . .

No.9, dated Reunion, the 22nd April 1893.

From -- C. W. BENNETT,Esq., Her Majesty's Consul at Reunion,

To -- Her Majesty's secretary of State for Foreign affairs.

With reference to Sir Villiers Lister's despatch No.2 of the 2nd of Febraury last, conveying to me Your Lordship's approval of the steps I was about to take to test the legality of the poll tax imposed on persons of Asiatic and African origin residing in the Island of Reunion, I have the honour to report that on further inquiry I find that the result of an appeal to the Cour De Cassation at Paris is doubtful, and under these circumstances I can hardly advice the British Indian community to risk five thousand francs on the chance of success.

I am in some doubt as to whether this change of opinion on the part of the lawyers comes from a closer examination of the law in question, or is the result of pressure put on by the Government in order to save a tax which brings in eighty thousand francs a year to the local budget.

11 It is absolutely impossible to find here a lawyer who is independent and will give an honest opinion on the case.

I would, therefore, respectfully suggest that, before any further action on my part is taken, the question on the validity of the law of the 17th of June 1887, published in the French "Journal Officiel" of the 7th of July 1887, should be laid before the legal adviser of Her Majesty's ambassy at Paris for his opinion and advice.

-.-.-.-.-

Dated India, Office, London, the 24th June 1893.

From -- George W.E.Russell, Esq., M.P. Her Majesty's Under Secretary of State for India,

To -- Her Majesty's under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

With reference to Sir T.V. Lister's letter of the 1st instant, relating to the question of the legality of the poll tax imposed on persons of Asiatic and African origin in the Island of Reunion, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to state that the Earl of Kimberly concurs in the suggestion that the opinion of the Legal Adviser of Her Majesty's Embassy in Parris should be taken as to the validity of the law of the 17th June 1887.

In referring this matter to the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, Lord Kimberly would suggest that attention be drawn to the history of the case given in "Le Verite" of the 5th July 1891 (a Reunion newspaper), a copy of which was enclosed in Consul Bennett's despatch, No.26, dated the 10th July 1891, and to the subsequent correspondence on this subject noted on the margin.

See F.O. Letter to I.O. 7th Aug. 1891.
Foreign Office to India Office, 24th and 25th August 1891.
India to Foreign Office, 5th September 1891.
Foreign Office to India Office, 4th and 29th September 1891.
India Office to Foreign Office, 7th October 1891.
Foreign Office to India Office, 10th May 1892.
India Office to Foreign Office, 3rd June 1892.
Foreign Office to India Office, 26th September 1892.
Foreign Office to India Office, 5th January 1893.
India Office to Foreign Office, 18th January 1893.

EXTRACTS FROM THE G.OS. RELATING TO Emigration movement (1842-1911) Public protest and agitation (1911)

IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

ABSTRACT OF THE G.O.

Recording the resolution passed at the sessions of the 18th Madras Provincial Conference ---1911 on the subject of the treatment of Indian in South Africa.

REFERENCE:-G.O.No. 740(Ordi) dated 7-7-1911, Public Dept.

Extract from the Resolutions passed at the Sessions of the 18th Madras Provincial Conference 1911:-

RESOLUTION III.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

This Conference learns with some relief of the negotiations now proceeding towards a solution of the South African Indian question and calls on the people of India to continue unabated their moral and pecuniary support of their countrymen in South Africa who have displayed unshaken firmness and incurred unparalled sacrifices in a prolonged and difficult struggle. It further trusts that the settlement to be arrived at will not only remove all the disabilities of Indians in South Africa, but establish the complete equality of the people of this country with the other subjects of the British Empire.

This Conference records its satisfaction at the prohibition by the Government of India of Indentured Emigration to Natal from the 1st July; and it sincerely trusts that no heed will be paid to the representation of the Natal planters for reconsidering in any way the decision arrived at by the Government of India declaring indentured emigration to Natal unlawful.

- - - -

(17)

EXTRACTS FROM THE G.OS. RELATING TO Emigration affairs (1845-1920)
Public Protest (1919).

IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

ABSTRACT OF THE G.O.

Indians in South Africa - A Public Meeting.

REFERECE:-G.O.No. 334(Confi)dated 9-6-1919, Public Department.

Extract from the Hindu, dated the 16th December 1913.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

A PUBLIC MEETING.

Under the auspicies of the Indian South African League, a public meeting was held last evening at 5-30 p.m. in the Auditorium to express the heart felt gratitude of the citizens of Madea Madras to His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India for his sympathetic, courageous and outspoken pronouncement on the South African Indian question.

The Right Rev. Dr. Henry whitehead the Lord Bishop of Madras presided. Among those present were:- The Hon'ble Mr. T.V. Seshagiri Iyer, the Hon'ble Mr. B.N.Sarma, Dewan Bahadur Govindaraghava Iyer, Diwan Bahadur Adinarayaniah Mr. C.P.Ramaswamy Iyer, Mr. M.A.Tirunarayana Chariar, Mr. N.Subba Rao, Mr. K.B.Ramanathan Rev. G.Pittendrigh Rev. Bittman Hon. Dr. T.M.Nair, Rev. Canon Goldsmith, Mr. G.A.Natesan, and Mrs. Whitehead.

The Chairman's speech.

The Chairman in opening the proceedings of the meeting said.

I should like to say a few words as an Englishman and a Christian.What Indians do claim is that the Indians who have been allowed to settle in South Africa and make South Africa their home should be treated with common justice and humanity. It is a platitude to say that society is built up on respect for law and order. But there is such a thing as tyranny masquerading under the form of law; and when that is unhappily the case resistance to law becomes not a crime, but a virtue . I shirnk from saying anything that may even seem to encourage lawlessness: but I think that it is necessary to say quite plainly and openly that the Indians in South Africa are now resisting not

law but tyranny. They have been very patient. For twenty years or more they have pleaded for justice, and it is only after exhausting every other possible means of securing redress for their cruel wrongs, that they have at last taken the step of Passive Resistance to unjust laws. For the South African Government, therefore to appeal to the duty of obedience to the laws seems to me to ignore the obvious fact that the just complaint of the Indians for the last twenty years has been that the law has been made an engine of tyranny and injustice. It is all very well for the South African Government to say "we cannot consider your grievances till you cease your resistance to the law". The Indians can say with far more reason we will cease our resistance to your laws when you cease to make them instruments of oppression. In saying this I do not for a moment condone any acts of unprovoked violence that may have occurred on the part of the Indians: but I must repeat with regard to these outbreaks what I have already said elsewhere, that the responsibility for them must rest mainly upon those who have provoked the conflict by injustice and cruelty.

I have spoken so far as an Englishman taught from my childhood to hate tyranny and to regard it as a sacred duty to stand up for the oppressed and persecuted, to whatever race or country they belong. May I say just a very few words as a Christian. I feel all the more indignant at the cruel injustice inflicted on the Indians in South Africa just because it is inflicted by men who profess to be disciples and followers of Jesus Christ. Tyranny is hateful in any case. It is doubly hateful when exercised by Christians in direct defiance of their creed and and in flagrant opposition to the whole teaching and example of Him whom they acknolwedge as their Lord and their God. I frankly confess, though it deeply grieves me to say it, that I see in Mr. Ghandhi, the patient sufferer for the cause of Righteousness and Mercy, a truer representative of the Crucified Saviour than the men who have thrown him into prison and yet call themselves by the name of Christ.

The Chairman then called upon Dewan Bahadur M.Adinarayaniah to move the following Resolution:-

Thanks to the Viceroy.

"This Resolution requests the Chairman to convey to His Excellency Lord Hardinge the grateful thanks of the citizens of Madras for his sympathetic, statesmanlike and courageous pronouncement on the South African Indian question."

Mr. Adinarayaniah's Speech.

Extracts from G.O.S relating to Emigration affairs (in the Madras Presidency (public portion) 1921.

15(MG.K)

(20)

G.O: Ms. No.493, dt. 3.6.1921: Law General.

Sub: Resolutions - Public Meeting, Karaikudi.

* * * * * *

M.R.Ry. M.S. Venkatarama Ayyar Avl.M.A.L.T., was voted to the Chair. The following is the jist of the resolutions passed at the meeting.

(a) That this meeting is of opinion that the system of passports between India and straits settlements, works great hardships, at least on the Indian Side, and that therefore the Governments concerned be requested to remove it.

(b) That this meeting views with grave apprehension the possible increase of taxation by the new Government warns the New Council and the New Government against any such increase inasmuch as it would aggravate the strain of the people and the existing unrest in the land and emphasises the necessity for the appointment of a commission for retrenchment all round.

@%@%@%@%@ %

122/RH/78

2136/RI

199/RI/84
1922/85
5275/RH/86
9.11.89 RH
2142/RH/90
2334/RH/90
9A55
RH-94
5658/RH/23/8/2001
23/5/16/RH
15/11/16 RH/RI
96